

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02

IO-13 /069 W

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R 241035Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9489

INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINR, NI

SUBJECT: MILITARY-CIVILIAN RELATIONSHIPS

1. LAST FRIDAY NIGHT (FEBRUARY 18) UNITS OF THE NIGERIAN ARMY FORCIBLY ENTERED THE RESIDENCE OF POPULAR MUSICIAN FELA ANIKULAPO-KUTI, BEAT AND ARRESTED MORE THAN A SCORE OF THE SINGER BAND AND HANGERS-ON, INCLUDING SOME YOUNG GIRLS, AND SET THE RESIDENCE ABLAZE. FELA HIMSELF WAS BEATEN AND TAKEN INTO CUSTODY. SOME NEWSMEN AND PHOTOGRAPHERS WHO CAME TO COVER THE NEWS STORY WERE BEATEN AND HAD CAMERAS SEIZED OR BROKEN.

2. ANIKULAPO-KUTI (FORMERLY RANSOME-KUTI), A LIBERTINE MUSICIAN IN REPEATED TROUBLE FOR MARIHUANA USE, ADVOCATES VAGUE, CONTRADICTORY MIXTURE OF PAN-AFRICANISM, SOCIALISM AND CIVIL LIBERTARIANISM. HE IS MUCH MORE TRENCANT, HOWEVER, IN HIS ATTACKS ON FMG SOCIAL POLICY. HIS FAVORITE THEME IS FMG CONNIVANCE IN PROCESS WHEREBY RICH BENEFIT FROM DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES WHILE POOR GET NOTHING. AS REPEATED VICTIM OF POLICE HARASSMENT, FELA IS ALSO MOST OUTSPOKEN NIGERIAN CRITIC OF POLICE/ARMY HEAVY HANDEDNESS IN SUCH MATTERS AS WHIPPING TRAFFIC OFFENDERS. FELA GAVE FMG ANOTHER REASON FOR HOLDING GRUDGE AGAINST HIM

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WHEN HE TURNED DOWN INVITATION SERVE ON FESTAC COMMITTEE,, SAYING FESTIVAL BUREAUCRACY WAS "HUGE JOKE".

3. FMG HAS ATTEMPTED TO DOWNPLAY VIOLENCE WHICH OCCURRED FRIDAY NIGHT BUT THE INDEPENDENT //PUNCH// AND STATE-OWNED //SKETCH// (FROM YORUBALAND) HAVE BEEN RUNNING DAILY FEATURE STORIES. SEVERAL THOUSAND COPIES OF SATURDAY'S //SKETCH//

WERE CONFISCATED BY FMG IN UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORT CONTROL PRESS REPORTING OF INCIDENT. GOVERNMENT STATEMENT WHICH BLAMES INCIDENT ON MALTREATMENT OF TWO ARMY MOTORCYCLISTS BY MEMBERS OF FELA'S ORGANIZATION SEEMS SELF-SERVING AND MAY PROVOKE CHRGES OF COVERUP.

4. THIS INCIDENT COULD FURTHER DAMAGE ALREADY POOR MILITARY-CIVILIAN RELATIONS IN THE COUNTRY. OVER THE COURSE OF LAST YEAR AND A HALF, INCIDENTS INVOLVING MILITARY MALTREATMENT OF CIVILIANS HAVE INCREASED. MUCH OF THE TROUBLE CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO A LACK OF DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE NIGERIAN ARMY. IN THE CURRENT CASE, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS FMG DILIBERATELY SET OUT TO TEACH POLITICAL CRITIC A LESSON. ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, ARMY WAS GIVEN THE GO-AHEAD TO SACK THE COMPOUND WITH PROVISIO THAT FELA'S AGING MOTHER NOT BE PHYSICALLY HARMED (SHE WAS NOT SERIOUSLY HURT). WITH REPORTS CIRCULATING OF ATROCITRIES (AND DEATHS) PERPETRATED BY SOLDIERS LAST FRIDAY, FMG MAY HAVE REAL PROBLEM ON ITS HANDS. FELA'S FOLLOWING NUMBERS THOUSANDS OF YOUNG URBAN UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED. MORE CLASHES BETWEEN YOUTHS AND SOLDIERS ANRE POSSIBLE. ALSO, FELA'S MOTHER, WHO IS REPORTEDLY A MEMBER OF THE SAME EGBA SOCIETY AS THE HEAD OF STATE, IS PRESSING FOR AN APPOINTMENT WITH HER FELLOW ABEOKUTAN, GENERAL OBASANJO.

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Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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